

THREE SEVEN

**ATTEMPTING
TO CAPTURE...**

Alana Ruptak

THE OUTSIDER

Shirley Del Valle

PERSONAL BESTS

Rebecca Mui

**C.N.R.
Archives**

**CNR HONORS
MAGAZINE!
SPRING 2004,
ISSUE #4**

**NEVER TO
RETURN**

Ruth Santiago



CONTENTS

3	Letter from the Editor <i>Kathryn Tyranski</i>	13	Attempting to Capture... <i>Alana Ruptak</i>
4	Director's Letter <i>Dr. Amy Bass</i>	14	As We Grow <i>Sarah H. Murray</i>
6	Personal Bests <i>Rebecca Mui</i>	15	Fell in Love with a Boy...And a Girl <i>Richelle Fiore</i>
7	Now...Where Were We <i>Christina Simpson</i>	16	<u>Capturing the Moment</u> : Photographs by <i>Alana Ruptak</i> <i>Alana Ruptak</i>
8	<u>Spring 2004</u> : Honors Courses	17	Untitled <i>Amy Perry</i>
10	Honors Holiday Celebration 2003	19	Never to Return <i>Ruth Santiago</i>
11	More Medals		
12	The Outsider <i>Shirley Del Valle</i>		

Femmes d'Esprit Spring 2004 ~ Issue 4

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

This is by far the hardest thing I have to do when it comes time to publish *Femmes*. I have to search for a meaningful and insightful topic and then words that describe said topic. What am I going to say this time?

To break the ice, let me welcome you back to CNR and the Spring Semester. Happy New Year! I hope that the winter break was relaxing, restful, and fun for all of you.

Again, we have a great first issue for the semester. Students have reflected on beginning anew and getting back into another semester. Getting back into the groove of another semester is always difficult, but before we know it...we'll be wishing our seniors farewell. Allow me to tell you about some updates with *Femmes*.

Femmes is undergoing construction. The Honors Magazine is looking for feedback. As the readers, contributors, and as the spirit of this magazine, what would you like to see in the future? Is three issues per semester too much? Are the themes too cliché? These are important questions that need answers and with that thought in mind, I would like to introduce you to the new *Femmes d'Esprit* Editorial

Board.

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The board will help bring more feedback to the Honors magazine in order for it to improve and continually be fresh and new.

The board plans to meet every other week but, anyone who would like to stop by a meeting with an idea, please feel free. This is your magazine. Come. Share. Contribute.

The Honors Program has undergone immense changes in one semester and the change can be attributed to the motivational and inspirational director, Dr. Amy Bass.

Femmes is following the suit of the Honors Program. If you would like a position on the board, please let me know...there is room for everyone.

For your reference, you can e-mail thoughts, comments, and contributions to femmesdesprit@yahoo.com.

Enjoy the beginning of the semester and just think...in a few short weeks, it'll be Spring Break.

One last thing...a confession: my editorial letter was the last thing to enter this magazine! I'm guilty of running my own deadlines! However, I guess I did find my topic and the words to go with it and until the next time a *Femmes* deadline approaches, I will be searching again.

Sincerely,

Kathryn M. Tyranski
Editor-in-Chief

DIRECTOR'S LETTER

Dr. Amy Bass

It is amazing what kinds of things can consume our attention. So much to think about in this world of ours, but seemingly little control over where our focus will lie at any given moment. With snow plummeting from the sky in seemingly unprecedented amounts these past months, the weather has largely consumed New Yorkers heads, with many television minutes and headline inches expended to just how much more we can take.

I will admit that I called the number every ten minutes or so: 914.654.5000. "Thank you for calling the College of New Rochelle," the voice mercilessly intoned. "If you are calling from a touch tone phone....."

"Any luck?" my husband asked after I hit re-dial the twentieth time or so.

"Nope," I glumly replied, looking out our living room window at a quickly disappearing Central Park. "It must be snowing an inch an hour at this point!"

I called again and found that my perseverance had paid off. The voice, once merciless and apathetic, took on a tone of caring and compassion: it informed me that the campus was shut down due to inclement weather. Suddenly ten years old again, I shouted from the living room, "SNOW DAY!!!!!!!" My husband, who had to go to work the next day regardless (he kept muttering "network news knows no weather"), turned a relatively deaf ear.

We had been into the spring (and I use that word loosely) semester a mere two days when Mother Nature graced us with a reprieve, and while everyone's syllabus suddenly needed a little tweaking to adjust for the missed day, it made the transition into school a bit easier to bear. It reminded me of my days in elementary school when I would flip the radio dial incessantly until I heard the chant that meant I had a

day of sledding ahead of me instead of multiplication tables and verb conjugations: "No school, all schools, Berkshire County School System."

And now we're back, with books lying on our desks, unread and holding marvelous possibilities, and grades that might still all be A-pluses and beyond. Graduation looms for some, while the thought of becoming a veteran college student hangs over the freshmen. Papers, not yet written, have the potential to be brilliant, and while we have only just begun, spring break lies ahead - almost in reach.

And yet, as our focus finally turns away from the weather and toward what we're supposed to be doing, we are sidetracked by one of the events that signals that spring is around the corner and winter can be put to rest: the Super-Bowl. Seriously, how is one supposed to focus on schoolwork (or the presidential campaigns, the ongoing situation in Iraq, "mad cow", etc.?) when issues of such monumental importance abound?

Lots of folks, it seems, are in trouble. The FCC claims that over 200,000 television viewers have filed complaints regarding the exposure of Janet Jackson's breast at the hands of Justin Timberlake, who called the incident a "wardrobe malfunction," during the SuperBowl halftime show. FCC Chair Michael Powell, deeming the incident a "classless, crass and deplorable stunt," has initiated what he describes as a complete inquiry. CBS has apologized and, after its own investigation, has found itself innocent of all charges. Viacom, which owns both MTV and CBS, has apologized, also claimed innocence, and in its own version of the Patriot Act has pulled a series of "edgy" videos out of MTV's prime time lineup, figuring that in times of crisis in America, self-censorship has always

done the trick.

Powell, it seems, only watched halftime, and even then, not too closely (for if he did, he undoubtedly would have found that the lip-synching of the "live" performers offered far more of an offensive scenario than anything Janet – "Miss Jackson if you're nasty" – did.) If he had watched the sidelines, for example, he would have seen half-naked women with big hair cheering on men in gladiator outfits. If he had watched the commercials, he would have enjoyed flatulent horses hawking beer. If he had watched the marching band, he would have witnessed a horn section slaughter OutKast and practically injure themselves in the process. If he had watched the game, he would taken pleasure in watching men engage in a sport so violent that helmets and excessive padding are required just to take part and referees are needed to remind players to "roll off" one another in a pile-up.

So what is the fallout? Janet went missing in action, a no-show at the Grammy Awards because her people claim she was disinvited. Justin not only showed up, he won best pop male vocalist, and offered another glib apology (allegedly mandated by CBS) that demonstrated his belief in his own victimization. Yes, Justin, you are a victim. You engaged in a scenario that involved a white man ripping off a black woman's top before a gargantuan cheering audience populated overwhelmingly with other white males. Is that the only way to view it? Absolutely not. But it is one perspective.

Perhaps the best perspective, however, comes

from FuseTV, the upstart cable channel devoted to becoming "the alternative to mainstream music television." On February 5, Fuse took out a full page ad in the *New York Post* (yes, I read the *Post*) entitled "An Open Letter to MTV." In its "letter," Fuse empathized with MTV regarding "senseless, brutal wardrobe malfunctions, accidents, and outright crimes," and suggests that the two networks join together to support IF-DADANT (The Institute for the Development of

Advanced Double Adhesive Nipple Tape). While MTV has allegedly been engaging in a series of nefarious strategies to prevent artists from appearing on Fuse, it would appear that Fuse has won a minor round against music television's Goliath.

And what else, as Bobby Brady often said at the end of an episode, have we learned from all this? TiVo, that wonderful device that helps out those of us who need to watch as much tele-

vision as possible, keeps track of what we program (how else would the company know that the "Janet incident" is the most TiVo-ed moment in its history?) in the most Big Brother of manners. Thousands of families in America watch television while eating dinner, as their complaints to the FCC indicate. And the dress that Jennifer Lopez wore four years ago to the Grammy awards (you remember, it involved tape) is so, well, four years ago.

On his first appearance on the Steve Allen Show way back in the 1950s, Lenny Bruce argued that it was silly to consider his comedy act offensive when folks like Orval Faubus and



Janet Jackson and Justin Timberlake at the 2004's Superbowl Halftime Show.
Photo: <http://money.cnn.com>

Continued on Page 17

PERSONAL BESTS

Rebecca Mui

For Mr. Rod

It is called Parkinson's disease. That's what my friends later told me. I use that term now, only to keep myself from inexcusable political incorrectness. To me, however, it had no name; I saw just a thin old man who kept shaking. I watched him stand across from me in church as Father Joe led us in prayer. I watched him, and I wondered how this man who could not control his body would be able to deliver a reading, as he was one of the lectors for the Mass. I mused that, perhaps, his voice would be a channel of strength, flowing from his trembling body in a defiantly rippleless stream and direct opposition to his visual image. I held my breath in anticipation as he began to read 1 Corinthians 13.11, the famous "Love" passage.

I recognized the words at once through his rather tenuous tone. I'll admit, I was somewhat disappointed that my previous theory was so quickly disproved, but I was soon captivated by the breathtaking words of Paul:

"Love is patient; love is kind;

love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude."

- 1 Corinthians 13.4

These immortal words, practically printed on every Christian wedding card, (past, present, and future), brought instantly to my mind my many memories of hearing them spoken by other lectors, friends, and even myself. The words were the same here, but the feeling was very different. It seemed the longer I listened, the more aware I became that I had been ignorantly wrong to expect or even wish for this lector to speak in a smooth, continuous stream.

This man's body shook and his voice followed suit, but in his tone I found the most wonderful comfort. He

.....
"...we as people
should embrace
ourselves for who
we are ..."
.....

delivered Paul's words as I have never heard them before, with more passion than I could have ever hoped to invoke. His body became a vessel, a hollow shell used to concentrate his strength and unite it all for the sole purpose of embodying the words he read through voice. I have heard many smooth, deep readings of this passage, but I have never heard a reader convey its meaning so vibrantly.

This is my point: we as people should embrace ourselves for who we are instead of constantly trying to become what we assume society expects us to be. My dear friend Mr. Rod repeatedly advised me that we should always strive to do our "personal best." He never cared much for comparisons or specific results. He assured me that my personal best would be good enough for everyone's expectations as long as I strived to make it good enough for mine.

Now, years later, while sitting in the campus chapel, listening to familiar words and subconsciously drawing up this article, I finally understand what he meant.

NOW...WHERE WERE WE

Christina Simpson

"We're all adults here," I continued to tell Nalda, laughing and intoxicated from the light-headed ambience. Once again, our jeers, cheers, and laughter reverberated throughout the somewhat quiet restaurant. Our waiter, Jason, tolerated us with a smile and somewhat witty behavior. It took around three different waiters to serve us our dinner. We liked the last one, a busty woman with a curly updo because she said, "shit".

These were not the same people I knew during the summer. And, yet, they looked the same. I still hear the laughter that resembles something during the hotter nights we all spent together. But, there's a shift in the seasons. The moisture on the windows began to clear and I realized we all brought something back from college that wasn't there before.

I don't blame anyone, though. We could never go back to our comfortable selves, these homes we build out of each other. I've known some of my friends since the fourth grade. Some, I just met.

At the expense of my boredom during Christmas vacation, I started developing a novel based on these foreign friends of mine. The drafts left over from that month were a chronicle of thoughts, actions, and events that concluded in an interesting question. We all remember the last days of high school, the radiance of our skin from the sun's endless opportunities. The tragedy and Shakespearean dramas written in blood on the lunchroom walls, the guilt-ridden, the romantics, the punks, the preps, the nerds, geeks, and human pincushions. I can still hear those silent screams, desperation to leave, and the regret of not going forward.

Then, some four years later, we are wearing the shoes and ties of our fathers. We count the days through income taxes, paydays, and bill collectors. And we wonder where those night

went, the insomnia of excitement and that youthful you in the reflection of your compact mirror. Then, you wake up, voice deepened and stockings snugly fit; you wake up and say, "I'm a grown-up now. I may not feel like it... but I think maturity's on to me so should I hide or just tie myself to the tracks while I still can?"

So, what do these college years, now, count for? The four fastest years... it's the time that doesn't count. It doesn't matter. I return knowing that this is not where I come to be a surgeon, a black feminist, a writer, or even a filmmaker (which is a path I *think* I chose for myself). I return here where I was in the beginning of the year: I'm finding myself under the smallest of spaces and through the darkest of corners.

Josh G. repelled us with his encounters of Josh and Danielle, this girl Josh sleeps around with. And all the while, Josh could do nothing but shrug while we laughed at our own horrible imaginations. Trevis looked at me and I knew everyone knew. Everyone knew about Josh and I. Trevis made it evident with his own jokes. I punched him now and then but I didn't say much because it was true, that fucking bastard. Just staring at him made me reconsider my choice of the first guy I'd ever lie down to.

These are not the years I would tell my husband over breakfast some *Twilight Zone* morning, when the curtains with their golden fringes are welcoming and spread so far apart. I would keep this hidden in the heart where my daughters cannot find it, for they'll discover it themselves, hopefully (This should account for the conservatism or subtle fears of our mothers when we left for college).

This is and will be an affair to remember, my friends. We mustn't talk of this or else it wouldn't be as special and secretive. And no one else we love will understand this union between you

Continued on Page 18

SPRING 2004 : HONORS COURSES

HON217: PSYCHOLOGY AND ETHICS

This course is designed to introduce students to the ethical principles that guide the work (and life) of psychologists. In addition to studying the current ethical code established by the American psychological Association, students will investigate the purpose of having an ethical code, study ethical models of decision making, and apply the ethical code to realistic situations. Thus, this course will take a philosophical, historical, cultural, and practical approach to the study of ethics in psychology.

The books being used for the course include:

Fisher, C. B. (2003). Decoding the Ethics Code. A Practical guide for Psychologists. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

Freeman, S. J. (2000). Ethics. An Introduction to Philosophy and Practice. Stamford, CT: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Dr. Lisa Paler
Psychology Department

Avenue



Photo: <http://www.talkinbroadway.com/world/AveQ.html>

LOWER EAST SIDE TENEMENT MUSEUM

Photo: <http://www.tenement.org>



Photos: www.cnr.edu

HON386: HONORS COLLOQUIUM II: AMERICA IN THE WORLD

The second half of the one-year, six credit experience, builds on the Fall Seminar, "America in World." Operating primarily as a Directed Study, students will design an individual project on some aspect of the previous semester's seminar, assisted by faculty and librarian mentors, and attend resource workshops and group process meetings with Dr. Ong. These meetings will be bi-monthly, and serve as a way for students to share research techniques and resources, make progress reports, participate in peer critique, and plan the Honors Conference Day.

Dr. Nelson Ong
Political Science Department

HON108: TOPICS IN IDENTITY

This spring, the Honors Program welcomes a new course into its fold: Honors 108 makes its debut, somewhat replacing a bevy of courses that have historically followed the required fall freshman course "The Self in Context." Entitled "Topics in Identity," the course continues the investigation into identity by merging members of the freshman cohort, who sit in relative academic isolation in the fall semester, into the broader honors program. Open to freshmen and sophomores, "Topics in Identity" will continually rotate themes, meaning that it can be taken more than once for credit. While its theme this semester, for example, is race and ethnicity, next spring the course will focus on gender and sexuality, and be taught by Dr. Roblyn Rawlins, chair of both the sociology department and Women's Studies Program.

This semester, the course hosts 14 students – 10 freshmen and four sophomores. As well, senior honors student Richelle Fiore is sitting in on the seminar as part of her capstone project in Women's Studies. As a group, students will plunge into an investigation of W.E.B. Du Bois's 1903 statement that "the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line." Examining identity via the lens of race and ethnicity, the class will engage with a wealth of cultural attitudes, ideas, and perceptions of race and ethnicity in the United States. The syllabus consists of poetry, fiction, film, music, and essays that inspire consideration on how race and ethnicity are constructed and maintained, challenged and contested, and the roles that each play in America's cultural fabric.

Thus, the readings for the course are, indeed, diverse. First on the syllabus is Cornell

West's seminal collection of essays, *Race Matters*. Students will read the book, attend the convocation with Dr. West, and then integrate their experiences in an essay. Other books include Dalton Conley's *Honky*; Julie Otsuka's *When the Emperor was Divine*; Michael Gold's *Jews without Money*; Zora Neal Hurston's *Their Eyes were Watching God*, and Esmeralda Santiago's *When I Was Puerto Rican*. Other assignments involve poetry by Langston Hughes and Claude McKay; the music of Billie Holiday, Eminem, and Stephen Sondheim; and films such as *Zoot Suit* and *Bullworth*. As well, the class will attend the smash Broadway show *Avenue Q*, and take field trips to places like the Lower East Side Tenement Museum and the Schomburg Center.

Dr. Amy Bass
Director of Honors Program

HON491: SENIOR SYMPOSIUM II

Building on the research begun in HON490, seniors will use their disciplinary training to explore an issue related to the theme, "Dimensions and Directions of Health: Choices in the Maze." Under the guidance of a faculty mentor, they will research a topic from their major field of study and lead a fully developed seminar presentation/discussion. It is intended that the presentation will engage students in multi-level cross disciplinary study discussion.

Dr. Cynthia Kraman
English Department

HONORS HOLIDAY CELEBRATION 2003



The Honors Holiday Celebration was another huge success this past December. The Honors Freshmen, Class of 2007, hosted the event.



Decorations were festively arranged in the Student Campus Center, Room C, and an array of refreshments were served.

The celebration received visits from students from all across the Honors Program as well as Faculty.

Congratulations to the Honors Freshmen on a successful holiday party! The Class of 2008 will surely have something to top!

Counterclockwise from top: Ruth Santiago '06 and Betsy Skrip '06 participate in the festivities at the Honors Holiday Celebration; Nisha Feliz '06 reads the latest edition of *Femmes* at the holiday celebration. Sarah Murray '07, Tung Nyguen '07, and Megan Skrip '07 pose for a picture at the Honors Holiday Celebration.

Photos: A. Bass

MORE MEDEA!

As a new semester begins, the Honors Program still remembers the Student Theatre Ensemble's production of *Medea* last December.

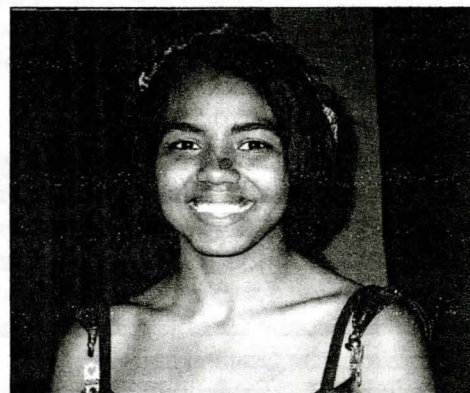
Many Honors students participated in the production, making it a huge success. Students from the Honors Program will grace the stage again in the upcoming shows for the Spring Semester: *Metamorphoses* and *The Laramie Project*.

Stay tuned to *Femmes* for more updates!



Clockwise from top: Sarah Worthington '07 and Sarah Murray '07 backstage at *Medea*; Emily Williams '05 and Samantha Young '05 as *Medea* and *Jason*; Christina Simpson '07 smiles as *Creon*, *King of Corinth*; Kathryn Tyranski '06 and Emily Williams as *Aegeas* and *Medea*.

Photos: A. Bass



THE OUTSIDER

Shirley Del Valle

I was on the platform of the Six Train waiting for it to show up. I stood there, just staring at the tracks and I noticed that I was so close to the edge. The edge of the platform, that is. I was right there at the edge, at the very point where the tunnel goes dark and the train disappears. As I stood there I just dazed into the lonely darkness.

Everything around me went away. All I could hear was Chevelle's *The Red*, a song, which in my interpretation, is about a person who is different from the norm and because of that he's picked on and set as an outcast. The character in the song has built up all this resentment and anger towards the people around him and he's about to explode. The first and last lines of the song are the same:

'they say freak when you're singled out.'

My mind begins to wander and I begin to question *what is normal?* I think I'm pretty normal, yet I've been called such words as *psycho, weird, freak, special, and odd*. All these words imply that I don't fit in—that I'm somehow not normal and that I'm strange. So, not only do I have my instinctual adolescent insecurities, but now I'm deemed weird by the world around me.

The train finally shows up and I take a seat, yet I'm highly aware that there are eyes on me—waiting for me to falter in some way, whether it's hoping for me to trip or witnessing my ill attempt to fit in the small space the fairly large man has left for me. I never look up. I never look up at the faces around me, the eyes that grill me, the laughs that await me. No, I never look up. Doing so will kill me. So, I just sit there and stare at the ground, and again drift off into my strange world.

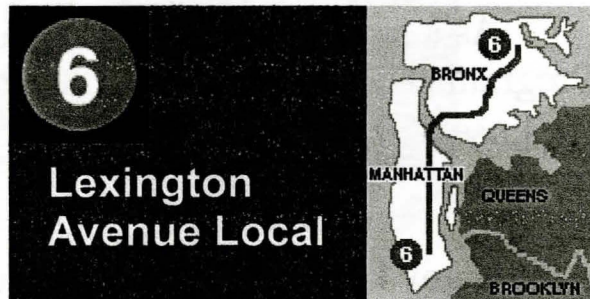


Photo: www.mta.info

There has to be a moment in your life where you 'fit in,' right? I mean, there just *has* to be. This feeling of being 'weird' or freaky goes away, and things get better—they just *have* to. Or, do you just never fit in? Are you just stuck in 'freak?' An old friend once told me it was all my doing, that I alone made the situation and myself awkward. My friend told me that if only I acted normal and cool I'd be okay—that the world would accept me. I just screamed at him 'I AM OKAY WITH ME. WHY ISN'T THAT ENOUGH? WHY DO I HAVE TO PLEASE THEM?'

His reply, 'Cause if you don't, you'll be an outsider. The loneliness will kill you. It'll be you against the world and you're not strong enough.' Finally, my stop comes and I get off the Six as fast as I can. I head toward the platform newsstand and pull out my last five dollars and get myself what every normal nineteen-year-old would get. I get the new issue of *Cosmopolitan*. There right before my eyes stood the epitome of normal—Alicia Silverstone, a blond haired, thin, light eyed beauty. I'm supposed to compare myself to her? She's what is considered normal? So, I look around me and I notice not one person looks anything like her. NOT ONE. Yet, I'm called a freak, weird, and odd.

As I make my way out of the subway I find myself asking who are the powers that be? Who are these people in society that decide I'm

Continued on Page 18

ATTEMPTING TO CAPTURE...

Alana Ruptak

The slightly bent index finger presses firmly upon the button, a click is heard. The movement triggers various mechanisms within, the movement transforms the active moment into a motionless state; an outward image is impressed upon the reel of negatives. The ghostly shapes, figures and shadows, the highlights and varying hues of black and gray represent what some one day will call a memory. This thin, narrow slice of paper captures and enables life to be immortalized, preserving smiles and the way sun highlights strands of hair. The grass can always be green if one chooses to look at the right image. Time can tick in either direction, with the past always visible.

Yet this art form can be deceiving, it can blur the lines of reality. One can mistake what once was, that is no longer as still present. I am a woman but if I look closely enough at the image of myself as a child, sometimes my body grows smaller, the lines of my hand decrease in visibility and my

— — — — —
*"Yet this art form
can be deceiving, it
can blur the lines of
reality..."*
— — — — —

heart and mind retreat into a time when innocence was treasured. If I look at the image of myself and another on the beach at sunset my mind jolts into confusion knowing it is dark and I am inside typing this on a cold winter night. Next to me now, Emily and I stand on Maura lawn and the sun highlights our hair slightly. I look to my left, where she should be standing and it is the cream colored concrete wall and it becomes only a picture, the light now radiates from the florescent bulb hanging on my desk, the light is equally dispersed and highlights nothing. Over the years I have kept one picture from each of my lovers and if I pull open the envelope flap that seals them from the world I am taken back into

each of their arms, strangely though the sensation is different this time. I wonder sometimes if I keep certain images taped to my walls in a state of desperation; a desperate attempt to hold onto people who no longer are within range of the view finder and no matter how much I adjust and adjust and adjust the aperture they stay out of focus.

The slightly bent index finger presses firmly upon the button, a click is heard. The aperture adjusts correctly the first time for each image. All that is desired comes into focus. The clicking continues twenty seven times. Twenty seven moments, twenty seven emotions, twenty seven lives. Seven twenty attempts to imprison an instance. I look to the pictures hung in desperation and I think, "I can take those down now." The tape peels away paint from the walls and some of the image itself and I think, "It's a sign." Trying to rewind the negatives I notice the process is quicker than usual. I open the back of the camera and realize I forgot the film.

AS WE GROW

Sarah H. Murray

Once, long ago, the world seemed perfect to us. We were little and the hardest decision we had to make was whether we wanted to play with Barbie or a game of baseball. Looking back, I think that I picked Barbie more than baseball. My cousin, a boy, picked the opposite. Yet in the end, the outcome was the same—we both had fun with what we were doing at that moment. As we grow up

and begin to enter the realm of the "Real World," the decisions we make may not always

end in the pleasurable way they did when we were playing with Barbie or a baseball.

One example of the decision making I'm alluding to happened to me fifth grade when I decided that I wanted to take honors classes in order to further my knowledge and to challenge myself. As a result of this decision, I was put into a class where my classmates had similar skills and work habits. Many of the same people in my first honors class stayed in my classes

throughout high school and most of them graduated in the top fifty percent of the class. There are, of course, many reasons why my classmates ended up in the high percentiles at the end of high school. One of the things I attribute to their success is that most of these honors kids cared about their grades and excelled in whatever endeavor they undertook. By the time high school started,

ther yet another year of school, a GED, or to drop out. For some, a relationship may have turned ugly because ignorant decisions may have meant hurt feelings or fights. For most of us, however, there was almost something we could fall back on...some way to pull ourselves out of this unpleasant situation. With work, many relationships can be mended and grades can be brought up.



"...decisions surround us and they will be the decisions we have to make for the rest of our lives..."

- Sarah H. Murray

Many high school students tend to rely on their parents to meet a large por-

tion of their needs.

Once out of high school, the decisions we make tend to carry greater weight in how our life progresses. For example, the decisions made by a college student are just as important as those decisions high schoolers have to make, but at a different level. Something a college student says in class is taken in and processed by every other student in that class. These fellow classmates then form opinions of that person by

Continued on Page 17

FELL IN LOVE WITH A BOY...AND A GIRL

Richelle Fiore

Mommy and Daddy lied to me many years ago when they sold me dreams of everlasting achievement and happiness. I can't particularly blame them—I do believe it is the wish of parents for their children to have perfect lives—just simply impossible, since there is no such thing as perfection. Plato gave us a clue in *The Republic* all those millenniums ago, but what did he know? Even the physically beautiful specimens of *America's Next Top Model* are afflicted with traumas—divaness, lupus, and confused racial identities. If the beautiful people in our shallow culture have problems, what hope do I have?

These days, I'm ready to start stroking my power cords and rock out with a shaved head—only I'm in the wrong decade for that. Punk and the seventies blended into eighties New Wave (I claim Debbie Harry as a spiritual guide for life) but its spirit burned inside at three through the truly outrageous Jem and the Holograms and rivals The Misfits. There is something iconic about a shaggy, pink haired Amazon who is transformed to a rock chick with the help of a massive computer named Synergy. A cultural high for girls of all ages occurs each episode.

The sentimentality of your last semester is often potent. Around the campus are people and places that have filled your life for four years. History (offers both difficult and easy pleasure) is the steady drumbeat that keeps the rhythm. Sometimes, it's just so right to give in to the beauty of a drum solo and dance alone in your socks. There are never any words, just the vibrations of being alive.

The contents of CNR (physical and imaginative) are the bass of my band. Furious, screeching, and pounding often during what we could call 'hard times.' My vocals (intellect and curiosity) embrace that tempo.

I may be working on material for my debut

album, so while I'm writing with collaborators, we'll listen to some inspirations tunes. At the moment, the White Stripes. I thank them, because they (and because of them, I):

fell in love with a girl

I fell in love once and almost completely

she's in love with the world

but sometimes these feelings can be so misleading

Walter Pater urges artists "to burn always with this hard, gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life." I've put this on my promotional bumper-stickers as my aesthetical and philosophical motto. But even punkers eventually would slow things down slightly to shout out the chorus. Sometimes, my friendships and sanity prefer when the lights get low and the air becomes thick with too many cigarettes. It's more than a change in mood. The beauty of performance art (and life) is the variations. There must be a million versions of *At Last*, with Etta James as the standard, in my iPod.

Neo-soul singer Joss Stone offers me the same words as before with her own vibe.

Oh, I must be fine cause my heart's still beating

Come and kiss me by the riverside

Sarah [Bobby] says it's cool, she [he] don't consider it cheating, oh

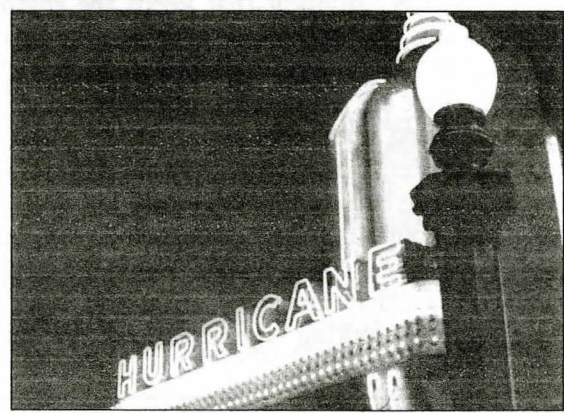
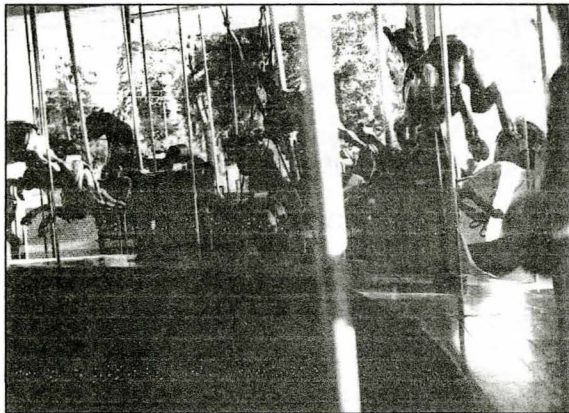
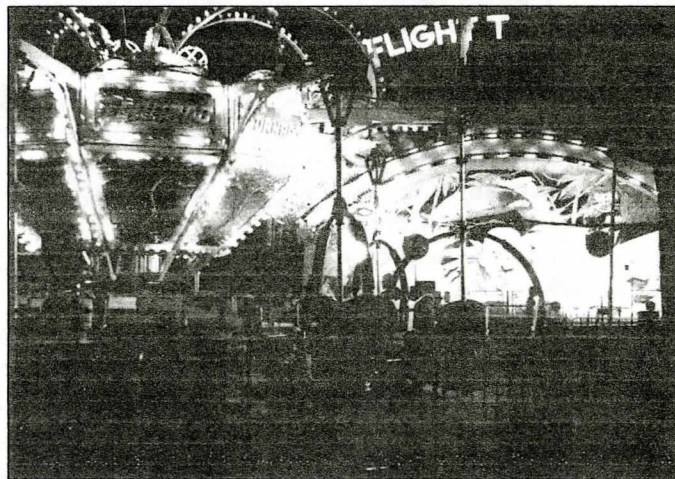
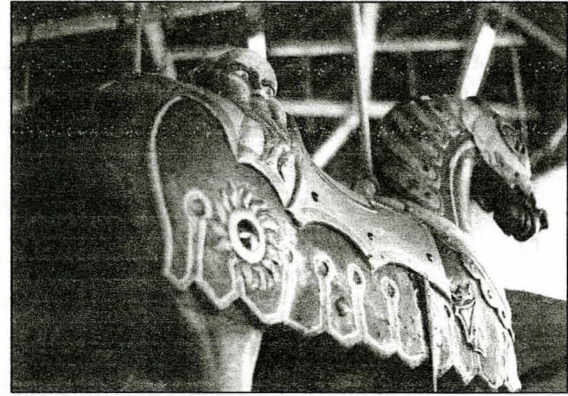
Set change. May's coming. It's almost time for me to unplug my amp. I'll leave some tracks behind.

Don't go telling all my lies on Sarah

CAPTURING THE MOMENT :

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALANA RUPTAK

The following photographs were taken at the Lakeside Amusement Park in the outskirts of Denver, Colorado.



UNTITLED

Amy Perry

Ah, the spring semester. I see the dawn of the summer sun in the horizon, feeling the warmth of the future upon me.

Oh, the pains of March and the harshness of reality. The mud, the slush, the brown soggy grass, oh the horror!! It's the only month that lasts all year.

I believed it to be a beach but now I'm sinking in mid-semester quicksand. Just when I thought it was over, it was.

Waking up one morning it occurred to me three months had passed and where had they gone? The beginning seems like a distant yesterday.

LETTER

Continued from Page 5

institutions such as segregation permeated American society. While Bruce has long since left us, we might want to think about the juxtapositions that he created whenever someone arrested him for obscenity. What's left, then, to do? A rare instruction from my pop-cultured infused head: turn off the television, put down the *New York Post*, and try to enjoy the last days of winter as spring starts to rear its lovely head.

DECISIONS

Continued from page 14

what they heard that person say. The decision to join one activity may result in missing the chances another group has to offer. These types of decisions surround us and they will be the decisions we have to make for the rest of our lives.

You have to find a balance. My personal decision to join the CNR Honors Program resulted in taking intellectually challenging classes, while being able to take extra credits throughout the course of my studies. Each action that we perform will have a reaction. Since none of us has the power to see the possibilities of every decision we ever choose to make, it is feasible that in the course of our lifetime we will make several mistakes. The great thing about the decision making process is that even when we make mistakes, or something does not turn out the way we had hoped it would, we learn, grow stronger, and know not to repeat the mistake.

WHERE WERE WE?

Continued from Page 7

or me. This is why they're strangers to me now, with their own scorching adulteries.

The spring must guarantee some softer clouds and clearer breezes. But, the year, my college life, has not finished full circle. So, my heart remains in ascension, not waiting for adulthood but, rather, continuing this path I've made for myself. And those who stay with me, I'll love all the more. And those who fade from my side, I adore them for helping this path in its cultivation. Either way, I do suspect these years will be as fleeting, furtive, and magnificent as the days of F. Scott Fitzgerald's characters.

So, the pot is hot and the bubbles begin to form. The water is boiling. And I'm stuck in the center of the cauldron. That's how friendships end. It could be just the wrong amount of seasoning. What you imagined could be an excellent recipe turns to shit. And you're left there days later trying to understand the eruptions of bad odors and sticky tensions with this strong and unshaken demeanor. Really, you just want to be a baby again, new and innocent and dumb.

THE OUTSIDER

Continued from Page 12

abnormal. I walk down 86th Street with my head held down, thinking and hoping that clarity will come my way. I hope someday this strange dark cloud that hovers over me will cease to exist. But, until that clarity comes I will remain an outcast, a freak, or whatever it is you call me. Does it bother me? Sometimes, but I rather be alone than be in bad company. I'll stay with the titles you normal people give me and I'll be okay.

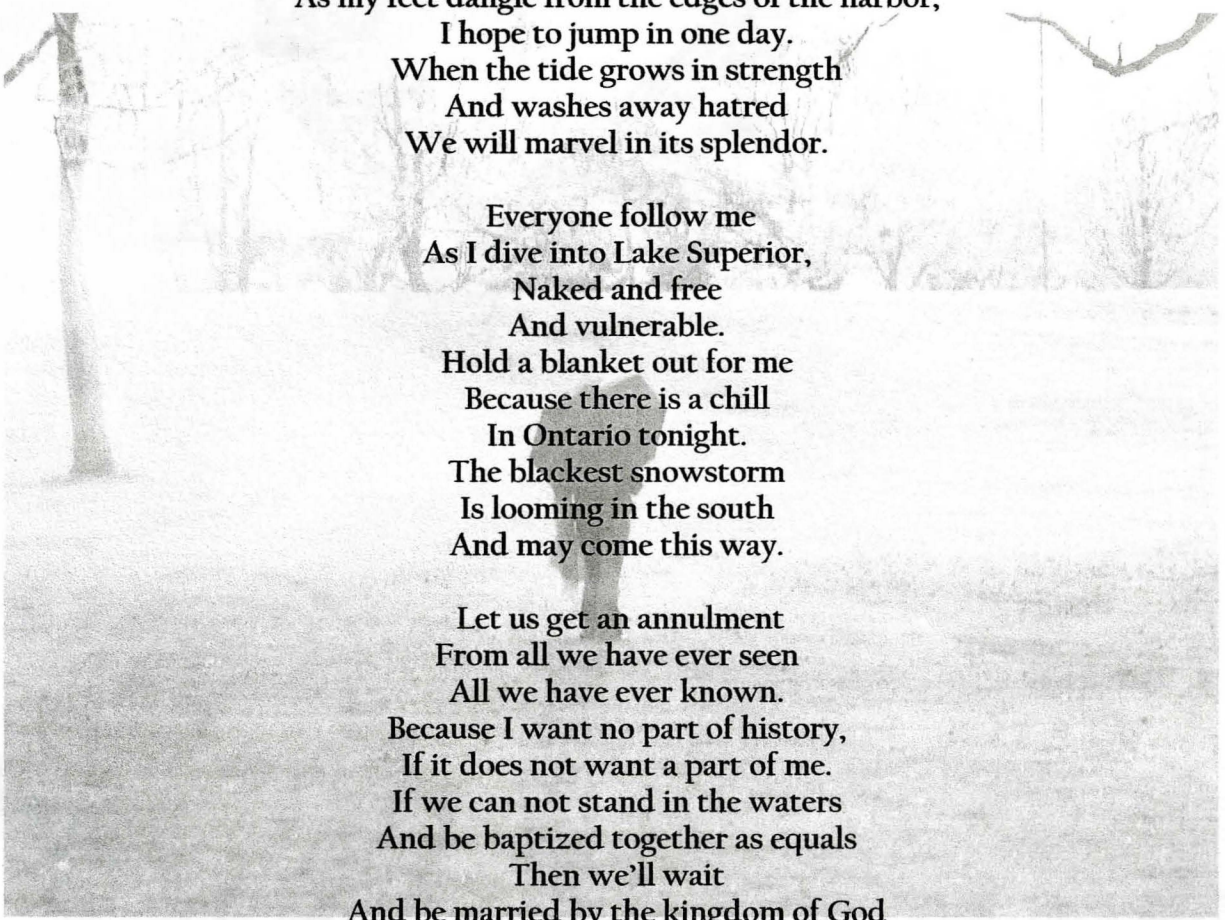
I'm determined to prove that old friend wrong. Chevelle is no longer playing in my head. It's now Dave Matthews's *Rhyme and Reason*:

'my head won't leave my head alone.'

A catchy tune, you should look it up, that is, if you don't mind taking suggestions from an outcast.

NEVER TO RETURN

Ruth Santiago



Let us not return
To where we once were
In a marriage of recklessness.
Let us taste the breeze
As we all come together
In the San Francisco bay.
As my feet dangle from the edges of the harbor,
I hope to jump in one day.
When the tide grows in strength
And washes away hatred
We will marvel in its splendor.

Everyone follow me
As I dive into Lake Superior,
Naked and free
And vulnerable.
Hold a blanket out for me
Because there is a chill
In Ontario tonight.
The blackest snowstorm
Is looming in the south
And may come this way.

Let us get an annulment
From all we have ever seen
All we have ever known.
Because I want no part of history,
If it does not want a part of me.
If we can not stand in the waters
And be baptized together as equals
Then we'll wait
And be married by the kingdom of God
Loved by all.

